

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF RUBEN PABON, JR., HONOREE OF NOSOTROS MAGAZINE'S 33RD ANNIVERSARY GALA AWARD BANQUET

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ruben Pabon, Jr., who will be honored at the 33rd anniversary Gala Award Banquet of Nosotros Magazine on Saturday, February 21, 2001. The Banquet is an annual event that honors distinguished Hispanic leaders for their important contributions to society. This is an opportune time for today's Hispanic leaders to reflect on the economic, political, and cultural contributions that Hispanics have made to American society.

Ruben Pabon, Jr. was born in New York City and currently resides in New Jersey. He served in the United States Army during the Korean War, rising to the rank of sergeant. After being honorably discharged, he accepted a position with Pan American World Airways, from which he retired in 1987.

Mr. Pabon has continually exhibited a great passion for community service, which began when he joined the Newark Boringuen Lions Club, helping to establish outreach programs for the Hispanic community in Newark, New Jersey. He was later elected President of the Club, and received the Governor's and President's Awards for his hard work and dedication.

Mr. Pabon serves on several housing boards that seek to address the problems faced by Hispanic senior citizens and those in need of affordable housing in Newark. He currently serves as an active member of a task force created by Bergen County Executive Pat Schuber to recommend strategies for the implementation of a multi-cultural center in Bergen County, New Jersey. In addition, Mr. Pabon is treasurer of the Spanish American Cultural Association; a member of the Knights of Columbus; a member of the Hispanic Business and Professional Association; and a volunteer for the Association for Retarded Citizens in Bergen County.

In honoring Ruben Pabon, Jr., Nosotros Magazine is promoting the most important values in American Society today: hard work, dedication, and compassion. Mr. Pabon embodies these American ideals; and, throughout his career, he has worked tirelessly to provide others with the opportunity to meet the standard of excellence he has set.

Because of community leaders like Mr. Pabon, the Hispanic community is not only experiencing economic empowerment, but also

political strength. Today, we prepare for a future that reflects our years of hard work, and our commitment to each other.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ruben Pabon, Jr. for his invaluable contributions to the Hispanic community.

TRIBUTE TO JERRY R. POER

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Jerry R. Poer, a salon and cosmetology school owner from my district. On January 26, 2001, he was inducted into the National Cosmetology Association's Board of Directors Hall of Renown.

Mr. Poer was recently honored at the International Beauty Show in Long Beach, California. The award acknowledges his many years of contributions to the cosmetology industry. Poer has received numerous other awards and honors during his distinguished career. He has received the Charleston Cosmetologist of the Year and the South Carolina Cosmetologist of the Year honors. He has also served as President of the National Cosmetology Association of South Carolina and Styles Director of the South Carolina Fashion and Education Committee. While a member of Hair America he served as coordinator for the NCA Montage Collection.

Mr. Poer has been a platform artist, lecturer, and consultant for state shows, modeling agencies, and many educational classes. Modern Salon, American Salon, Passion, and Men's Passion have each featured Mr. Poer during his career. Mr. Poer has been inducted into the South Carolina Cosmetology Hall of Fame and served on the Governor's Advisory Board. Students and staff of his cosmetology school have received nine State Hair Styling Championships.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me and my colleagues today in paying tribute to an individual whose dedication to his field is extremely noteworthy. Mr. Jerry R. Poer continues to this day to support the growth and advancement of the cosmetology industry and he deserves our praise.

CELEBRATION OF 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SACRED HEART PARISH IN EAST CHICAGO

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with tremendous pleasure and admiration that I con-

gratulate the parishioners of the Sacred Heart Parish in East Chicago, Indiana, as they celebrate their 75th anniversary as a congregation, as well as the 60th anniversary of the opening services in their current sanctuary, on March 4, 2001. The day will begin with a special Mass conducted by Bishop Dale Melczek to be followed by a celebratory luncheon.

Originally known as Mission of Assumption Slovak Parish, Sacred Heart was founded in order to service the spiritual needs of Slovaks in East Chicago and Whiting, Indiana. Services were held at several churches in the two cities until Father Clement Mlinarovich saw a great need for the Mission in East Chicago. From 1926 to 1941, the Sacred Heart Parish conducted Masses, confessions, and missions at various churches throughout the city.

After many years of relying on other churches' facilities, the dedicated parishioners decided to build their own sanctuary. The beautiful church was dedicated in May 1941 by Bishop John Francis Noll of the Fort Wayne Diocese, with many delighted Slovak priests and lay citizens from around Lake County attending. The Sacred Heart congregation was overjoyed that they finally had their own house of worship. They also took special pride in the building because many of the parishioners volunteered to assist with its construction.

Father Andrew G. Grutka was the first resident pastor at the newly completed church. He preached to the Sacred Heart congregation from 1942 to 1944, after which he became the first Bishop of the Diocese of Gary. Father Louis Duray and Father Milan Bach succeeded Father Grutka and made significant improvements, including beautifying the sanctuary and purchasing a home for the priest. Father Joseph Semancik was later sent to Sacred Heart as the pastor, a position he maintains today.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating the congregation of Sacred Heart parish in East Chicago, Indiana as they celebrate the 75th anniversary of their founding and the 60th anniversary of the construction of their church. Sacred Heart Parish has undergone many changes from the time it began as the Mission of Assumption Slovak Parish. They have settled in East Chicago, built a beautiful sanctuary, and expanded the congregation to include a variety of ethnic backgrounds. What has remained the same is the dedication, loyalty, and love for their fellow man the parishioners have displayed throughout the parish's many years of service to the community. May God continue to bless the parishioners and the church leaders for many years to come.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS FOR MILITARY RETIREES: LET'S CARRY OUT A CREDIBLE DEMONSTRATION

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing legislation that will address deficiencies in the ongoing demonstration project to assess the viability of a Federal Employees Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) option for military retirees. Since Congress authorized that demonstration in the FY99 Defense Authorization, I have raised concerns that the limits on it would prevent us from gaining adequate data on which to judge this option. Unfortunately, those concerns have been validated over the past years, and I am resubmitting corrective legislation to put us back on the right track.

While many in Congress have been pushing for an FEHBP option for military retirees for years, that effort has been stymied because some believe that it would be too costly. That is because budget analysts made some illogical assumptions in projecting the cost of FEHBP for military retirees. For example, the budgeteers incorrectly calculated that all eligible military retirees would select this option. But that is not logical. Some people may be satisfied with their access to care under Tricare, or opt out based on cost calculations. Moreover, budget analysts did not account for the savings that would accrue in other health programs for those who participate in FEHBP.

Given these unrealistic assumptions, I joined other FEHBP supporters in pushing a demonstration so that we could validate the true cost and viability of this option. Unfortunately, even the demonstration was scaled back, creating a "Catch 22" situation.

Congress authorized a three-year demonstration limited to 66,000 participants at up to ten sites. Because the number of eligibles that could be offered this option was capped at 69,663, it has been almost impossible to attract a credible pool of participants on which to judge the viability and cost. To achieve anything close to our intent, we would have to have one hundred percent participation—something no one but the budget analysts ever assumed possible. Set up for failure, this effort could provide opponents the perfect fodder to kill the FEHBP option.

DOD never began any real marketing of the option to potential beneficiaries until August 1999—two months before the pilot was to begin. And the effort that was made was completely inadequate. Notification consisted of a postcard mailer without any detailed information so that eligible participants could compare costs to their current arrangements. People who have Medicare Part B coverage were not informed that under some plans, they wouldn't have to make copayments or meet deductibles. The Department was slow to announce health fairs conducted by FEHBP insurers, leaving less than a week in most cases for potential participants to plan.

The artificial limits, combined with inadequate marketing of FEHBP to military retiree,

led to unusually low participation. At the end of 1999, less than one thousand people in eight sites nationwide have signed up for the FEHBP option. Fortunately, a renewed marketing effort and extension for signup last year increased participation to 7200. But almost two years were lost in getting this demonstration off the ground, and it is set to expire at the end of 2002. Meanwhile, DOD still must spend money to market to this small group of eligible participants.

Those who participate in the FEHBP program are also prohibited from getting any further care in a military treatment facility. MTFs such as Walter Reed Army Medical Center need the older patients to keep up their full range of medical skills and they have the space to accommodate retirees. We should allow MTFs to bill health care plans for services—as we are now starting to do with Medicare Subvention.

My bill would address these limitations by:

Removing the limits on the number of people and areas of the country in which the demonstration may be carried out.

Removing the restriction, which prevents participants from using military treatment facilities (MTFs), and allows MTFs to charge the FEHBP plans for retiree services. That balances cost considerations, and ensures a steady mix of older patients so that the military medical personnel are able to keep up their full range of skills.

Extending the current demonstration two years so that we have the benefit of solid data and a credible program on which to judge the viability of the FEHBP option.

Mr. Speaker, these fixes are no substitute for comprehensive military retiree health care reform. In my view, the time for demonstrations and patchwork fixes to the DOD health care system is over. Congress took a major step in that direction last year by authorizing the "Tricare for Life" benefits. But we need comprehensive action to ensure a menu of affordable health care options for military retirees. I am confident that an honest assessment will confirm the viability of an FEHBP option for all military retirees.

We cannot continue to punt on that because of budget concerns. We provide FEHBP to millions of civilian federal employees throughout their careers and in retirement. Military personnel and their families make many sacrifices throughout their careers. The least we can do is provide them with the same level of care that other federal workers have. They deserve no less.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDINGS INCENTIVES ACT

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 2001

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) and a bipartisan coalition of other Members in introducing the "Energy Efficient Buildings Incentives Act."

Energy use in buildings in this country accounts for approximately 35% of polluting air

emissions nationwide about twice as much as the pollution from cars. It costs the average American \$1500 to heat and cool their homes every year, which amounts to an annual cost of \$150 billion nationwide. Commercial buildings and schools incur \$100 billion in annual utility bills. And yet, the tax code fails to provide sufficient incentives to reduce wasteful and unnecessary energy use. This is bad policy, and it must be changed. In these times of "brown outs" and "black outs" in communities across this nation and in times of rising fuel prices, we should be looking for ways to ensure that energy is never wasted.

That is why we have introduced the "Energy Efficient Buildings Incentives Act." Our bill would spur use of energy efficient technologies, such as super-efficient air conditioning units, which could result in a substantial drop in peak electricity demand of at least 20,000 megawatts—the equivalent of the output of 40 large power plants. At a time when many communities are currently facing electricity supply shortages, and the local political issues involved with siting and building new power plants are difficult and contentious, our bill provides a way to reduce pressures on the nation's electricity grid. Specifically, our bill provides tax incentives for:

Efficient residential buildings, saving 30% or 50% of energy cost to the homeowner compared to national model codes, with a higher incentive for the higher savings.

Efficient heating, cooling, and water heating equipment that reduces consumer energy costs, and, for air conditioners, reduces peak electric power demand, by about 20% (lower incentives) and 30%–50% (higher incentives) compared to national standards.

New and existing commercial buildings with 50% reductions in energy costs to the owner or tenant, and solar hot water photovoltaic systems.

If only 50% of new buildings reach the energy efficiency goals of this legislation, air pollution emissions in this country could be reduced by over 3% in the next decade, and decrease even more dramatically over time. In that same ten-year period, this legislation could result in direct economic savings of \$40 billion to consumers and businesses. For example, a family that installs an energy efficient water heater can get \$250 to \$500 back from the tax code changes and an additional \$50 to \$200 every year in reduced utility bills. Or a family that purchases a new home that meets the standards in this bill can get as much as \$2,000 returned to them by the tax incentives, in addition to the \$300 or more in continuing energy savings.

I urge other Members to join us in saving American consumers money, improving the air we breathe and the water we drink, increasing the competitiveness of American industries, and eliminating inefficiencies in the tax code by encouraging energy efficiency in our schools and our commercial and residential buildings.